

# Foreword

It would be foolish to pretend that Big-Power rivalry no longer exists in Iran. However, the major problem in Iran today, as everywhere else in the world, results from rivalry between two different ideologies, not from conflicting national interests. One of those ideologies, supported by Soviet Russia, promises the hungry peasants and workers of Iran a Utopia under Communism. The other, supported by the United States and other Western Powers, offers an opportunity for gradual improvement under democracy. While democracy offers continued respect for individual liberty, which Iranians enjoy today to a very considerable degree, the Soviet spokesmen speak of "true democracy" in a classless society without landlords.

The common man in Iran is bewildered by these conflicting appeals. Which will prove more persuasive to him is not yet certain. The principal ally of the democratic forces in Iran is the Soviets themselves, whose heavy-handed methods and threats of force to achieve purely Russian ends have deprived their propaganda of much of its effectiveness. Moreover, if the Soviets had been more successful in bringing Utopia to the U.S.S.R. during the past thirty years, their appeal to Iranians would carry more weight.

The principal ally of the Soviets in Iran is poverty, disease, and an ineffective governmental structure in Teheran. The people of Iran

have suffered through several generations of Great-Power rivalry, often at the expense of the Iranians. The experience has left a deep mark on their social and political thinking. As a consequence, it is natural that many Iranians today consider the present situation in their country to be merely a continuation of Iran's experiences during the past century, with Washington vs. Moscow substituted for London vs. St. Petersburg as the chief protagonists. Many students of the Iranian scene fall into the same error.